(c) if so, what were their demands; and

(d) how far these have since been fulfilled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) In protest against a "within the office" transfer order, the staff went on "cease work" on 1.6.2001. It was called off on 7.6.2001 after a compromise was reached and transfer orders were modified in the overall public interest and harmony.

Damage to Emergency Telephone Service due to rain

3091. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very often telephones are out of order due to damage to the cables;

(b) whether Government are aware that emergency services are affected due to this; and

(c) what action Government are going to take in this matter in rainy season to avoid such situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The telephone service gets affected due to damage to the cables.

(b) and (c) Whenever emergency services get affected, immediate action is taken for restoration of services or service is provided through alternate route. However, following actions are being taken to avoid such situations:

(i) Paper Core Cables are being replaced by PIJF or Optical Fibre Cables in a phased manner.

(ii) Induction of WLL in the network.

(iii) Proper coordination with the civic agencies like water works, electricity department etc.

(iv) Control rooms are opened to monitor the cable faults and early rectifications.